

**Government of the District of Columbia**



**Department of Public Works**

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Testimony of  
**William O. Howland, Jr.**  
Director, Department of Public Works

*"Bill 17-590"*  
**"DEBRIS REMOVAL MUTUAL AID ACT OF  
2008"**

Committee on Public Works and the Environment  
Jim Graham, Chair  
Council of the District of Columbia

September 22, 2008

Council Chamber, Room 500  
John A. Wilson Building  
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20004  
2 P.M.

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**TESTIMONY OF WILLIAM O. HOWLAND, JR.  
DIRECTOR, DC DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS  
BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ON PUBLIC WORKS AND THE ENVIRONMENT  
ON BILL 17-590 DEBRIS REMOVAL MUTUAL AID ACT OF 2008  
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 22, 2008, 2 PM**

- Good afternoon, Chairperson Graham and members of the Committee on Public Works and the Environment. My name is William O. Howland, Jr. I am the Director of the District of Columbia Department of Public Works. I am here to speak in favor of Bill 17-590, the “Debris Removal Mutual Aid Act of 2008.”
- The legislation would authorize the Mayor to enter into agreements with Maryland, Virginia, and municipalities and counties in those states, and the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority, to establish a process to request or provide help removing debris during emergencies and other special events. These agreements would be made under the authority of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Protection Act of 2004 (Pub. L. 108-458) ("IFTRA").
- Debris removal is an important component of recovering from an emergency, disaster, or other unusual event. Enactment of this legislation will benefit the District, Maryland and Virginia.
- Under the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Protection Act, jurisdictions that provide help consistent with IFTRA's requirements will enjoy a unique benefit. If the assisting jurisdiction enjoys any protection from liability when operating within its own boundaries, it carries that protection with it when providing assistance in another jurisdiction.
- Under the auspices of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, jurisdictions in our region prepared an agreement creating the process to request help and respond to requests for assistance. That agreement satisfies the requirements of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Protection Act.
- Several other jurisdictions already have entered into mutual aid agreements contemplated by this proposal, including Fairfax and Prince William counties and the City of Manassas. With the District's agreement to participate in this mutual aid program, I hope that other jurisdictions also will participate so that we can work towards greater regional cooperation in responding to extraordinary events.
- Thank you for giving me the opportunity to testify. Again, I ask your support for Bill 17-590, and I would be happy to respond to your questions.